

Amendments to the Abstract:

Please replace the Abstract with the following rewritten paragraph:

In a solid phase extraction (SPE) device, once all the columns [[31]] of the SPE plate [[29]] are filled with liquid [[(81)]], the needles [[(47)]] cooperate with engagement formations [[(49)]] on a pusher element [[(24)]] for pushing down the plate [[(29)]] together with an upwardly biased shoe [[(23)]] into sealing engagement with a peripheral spacer [[(13)]] surrounding a container [[(11)]]. Simultaneously, vacuum [[(78)]] is applied by appropriate control of a valve [[(76)]] and all the columns simultaneously transfer liquid into the drain container. Then, vacuum is released, needles [[(47)]] engage recesses [[(51)]] to move a carriage [[(20)]] above a collect container [[(12)]] and a similar prosecution is resumed.